Test Optional and Standardized Testing FAQ

What is test optional?
When a college or university is “test optional,” it means they do not require the SAT or ACT from applicants in order to be considered for admission. Instead, a greater emphasis is placed on grades and courses, as well as other factors like your extracurricular activities, essay, and recommendation letters. Each evaluation becomes more focused on your academic performance, your goals, and who you are as a person. Each university’s test-optional policy is different, which means you need to do your research to make sure if you’re eligible to apply test-optional, or if there’s some circumstance that will require you to still submit results from the SAT or ACT in order to be considered for admission.

Is Northeastern test optional?
Yes. Prospective students applying for the 2021-2022 academic year can apply “test optional” to Northeastern. Students who choose to apply “test optional” will not be penalized or disadvantaged for applying without testing.

Am I required to submit standardized testing?
No. Standardized testing is entirely optional, and you will not be penalized or disadvantaged for applying without testing.

How will Northeastern evaluate my application without standardized testing?
Even before moving test optional, Northeastern evaluated each application holistically, focusing more on the rigor of your coursework and academic performance in the classroom, in addition to considering your leadership, extracurricular involvement, personal qualities, fit for experiential learning, and fit for Northeastern. None of this has changed.

Before moving test optional, standardized testing was not reviewed by the Admissions Committee during our evaluation process. We only began to introduce testing into the discussion during our selection process for students who applied from a high school in the United States, while standardized testing was never introduced into the discussion for students who applied “test blind” from an international high school. As we move “test optional,” our selection process will be both the same as it always was, yet entirely different. For applicants who choose to submit standardized testing, we will only introduce testing into the discussion during the selection process, while standardized testing will never be introduced into the discussion for applicants who choose to apply “test optional.”
I am not sure whether or not I should submit results from the SAT or ACT. You should put your best foot forward when applying to Northeastern, by showcasing your application in the best or most positive way possible, and by making a favorable impression on the Admissions Committee. For example, consider our middle 50% score ranges for the SAT or ACT. If your scores are within the middle 50% or above, submitting your scores may make your application more favorable, although simply receiving a perfect SAT or ACT score does not in any way guarantee admission. If your scores are lower than our middle 50% and you choose to submit them, you will want to make sure you take additional times to showcase your fit for Northeastern and experiential learning elsewhere in your application.

I am applying from an international high school. I thought Northeastern was “test-blind” and would not review results from the SAT or ACT even if I submitted them? From Fall 2008 to Fall 2020, Northeastern was test-blind for all applicants who applied from a high school which was located outside of the United States. For the 2021-2022 academic year, our new optional standardized testing policy applies to all prospective students regardless of where you went to high school. All students will have the choice of whether or not to submit standardized testing for review as part of Northeastern’s admissions process.

How do I decide whether to submit standardized testing or not? You should only submit testing that best complements your academic preparation and ability in the classroom. Furthermore, if you submit standardized testing, you want to submit testing which is competitive for admission to Northeastern. For students who applied and were admitted to Northeastern in Fall 2020, 50% of the admitted students scored between 1470 and 1540 on the SAT, or 33 and 35 on the ACT.

Does Northeastern superscore? Yes. Northeastern will superscore your SAT and ACT. For the SAT, we will add together your highest Evidence-based Reading & Writing section and Mathematics section, from across multiple test dates, to create a new overall total SAT score. For the ACT, we will average together your highest English, Math, Reading, and Science sections, from across multiple test dates, to create a new overall Composite score.

Does Northeastern accept Score Choice? No. Northeastern requires you to send your results from all test dates. Once received, however, we will superscore your SAT and ACT results. Once your application is completed and reviewed by the Admissions Committee, only your superscored results will be included.
Does Northeastern accept ACT Single-Section Retesting
Yes. Northeastern does accept single-section retesting, and includes your single section test results when calculating your superscored ACT Composite.

Does Northeastern require the SAT Essay or ACT Writing sections?
No.

What score do I need to achieve on the IB Diploma in order to be offered admission?
Northeastern does not have any minimum scores; all applications are reviewed. For students who applied and were admitted to Northeastern in Fall 2020, 50% of the admitted students were predicted to achieve between 35 and 39 points (out of 42). When reviewing applications, Northeastern’s Admissions Committee does not consider the additional core points for the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge.

Can I submit results from the SAT or ACT and another test included in Northeastern’s testing policy, like my results from AP Exams, the IB Diploma or GCE Advanced Levels? Will the Admissions Committee focus on all results or only the strongest results submitted?
You can submit results from as many tests or as few tests as you’d like. Northeastern’s Admissions Committee will review each test result you submit, and all test results will be considered by the Admissions Committee when making a final admissions decision.

I am applying from a high school in the United States. Am I allowed to apply with my predicted IB Diploma results or predicted AICE Diploma results, instead of the SAT or ACT?
Yes.

Can I self-report my standardized testing?
Yes. All applicants can self-report final results through the Application Status Check. Upon choosing to enroll, all self-reported results must be verified by sending official results from either the testing agency or examination board. If your official results do not match your self-reported results, Northeastern reserves the right to rescind your offer of admission.

If I self-report my standardized testing, am I required to submit my official test results if I am admitted and choose to enroll?
Yes.
Can I apply to Northeastern using my predicted grades?
Yes. In the absence of final results from any national or international examinations, you are encouraged to submit predicted grades. Predicted grades can be provided by a high school official who can either submit them by completing Northeastern’s Predicted Grades Request Form or by using your own high school’s predicted grades form. Either document can be submitted with the School Report, high school transcript or Counselor Recommendation; or emailed to admissions@northeastern.edu from an official and verifiable school email address.

Predicted grades will be reviewed alongside your internal marks, and any promotional or preliminary examination results. As predicted grades are updated, you must request to have updated predictions sent to Northeastern. (Updates would include the predicted IB grades sent to the IBO as opposed to earlier predictions which were used for your university applications; or your provisional A-Level results issued before your final certificate). Once final results become available, results must be shared officially with Northeastern. All enrolling students will be required to share final results with Northeastern before being permitted to enroll. If your final results are not within an acceptable range of your predicted grades, Northeastern reserves the right to rescind your offer of admission.

Can I self-report my predicted grades in the Application Status Check?
No. You should only self-report final results in the Application Status Check. If you’re admitted and choose to enroll, we will require your official results which must match the results you self-reported. Northeastern has the right to rescind your admissions offer if your self-reported results do not match your official results.

Northeastern, however, encourages applicants to provide predicted grades for any national or international examinations, in the absence of any final results. Predicted grades must be provided by a high school official who can either submit them by completing Northeastern’s Predicted Grades Request Form or by using your own high school’s predicted grades form. Either document can be submitted with the School Report, high school transcript or Counselor Recommendation; or emailed to admissions@northeastern.edu from an official and verifiable school email address.
My standardized testing results appear on my high school transcript. Can I still apply test-optional?

If you indicate on your application that you are applying test-optional, we will not review any results from the SAT or ACT that were provided on your high school transcript or elsewhere in your application. Even if you choose to apply with standardized testing, Northeastern will only consider SAT or ACT results which were either submitted officially to Northeastern, self-reported in the Application Status Check.

If I initially apply test-optional, can I change my mind? If I initially applied with testing, can I change my mind?

If you already submitted your application, you can email your admissions counselor to update your testing status. All requests to update your testing status must be received by the dates provided below.

- If you initially applied test optional, and you would like Northeastern to now consider your standardized testing, your test scores must either be received officially or self-reported in your Application Status Check by deadlines listed below.
- If you initially applied with standardized testing, and your standardized testing was submitted to the university, you cannot update your application to test optional, as we cannot “un-see” your testing or erase your standardized testing from the system.

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<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Transfer</th>
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<td>Early Decision I by November 15th</td>
<td>Spring Transfer by October 15th</td>
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<td>Early Action by December 1st</td>
<td>Fall Transfer by April 15th</td>
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<td>Early Decision II by January 15th</td>
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<td>Regular Decision by February 15th</td>
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If I initially applied test optional and I was deferred to Regular Decision, can I update my application to include standardized testing?

Yes. You should email your admissions counselor to update your testing status. By February 15th, your official test results must be received by Northeastern, or you must self-report your standardized testing in your Application Status Check.

If you initially applied with standardized testing and were deferred to Regular Decision, you cannot update your application to test optional, as we cannot “un-see” your testing or erase your standardized testing from the system.